

Put on Spot by U Thant

U.S. Firm in Stand Against A-Ban Talks

By Murrey Marder
Staff Reporter

American officials said last night that the United States was totally skeptical about all overtures toward nuclear disarmament and arms control made by Communist China since its first nuclear blast last week.

There is no indication whatever, officials here said, that Red China is seriously interested in any negotiations on terms that would interest the United States.

Earlier in the day, a State Department spokesman said that the existing "channels for a dialogue are open" if Red China has "anything constructive to say" to the world's nuclear powers. The spokesman, Robert J. McCloskey, noted that "the British, French and

Soviet governments are represented in Peking, and we have periodic talks with the Chinese Communists in Warsaw."

But that statement actually was intended as more of a rebuff than an invitation. The United States was trying to get off the spot that United Nations Secretary General U Thant had put it on the day before. Thant publicly suggested "a dialogue between the United States, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, France and the People's Republic of China, perhaps sometime in 1965."

Since Red China exploded its first nuclear device last week, some world pressure has been building up for the

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nations of the world, and particularly the five now called nuclear powers, to look at the problem of the spread of nuclear weapons.

Red China pushed in that direction by coupling its announcement of its nuclear test with a call for a world summit conference to ban all nuclear weapons. Secretary of State Dean Rusk promptly rejected that overture as a propaganda "smokescreen." But Communist China's formal repetition of the idea, U Thant's comment, and other related suggestions, indicate continued pressure along these lines.

The United States wants, if possible, to avoid being put in a defensive propagandist position. If other nations desire it, a spokesman said yesterday, Red China even could be admitted to the Geneva disarmament talks.

But the United States is more determined, officials emphasized last night, to avoid being pushed into any action that would prejudice its se-

curity interests.

It is attractive enough, those officials said, for Red China with its mass of 700 million people and a militant world revolutionary policy, and one nuclear explosion to its credit, to call on all other nations to outlaw nuclear weaponry. But the United States, it was said, with nuclear weapons now vital for its security, would be foolish to consider

any such offer unless it is a workable and controllable portion of a sincere, stage-by-stage reduction of both nuclear and non-nuclear weapons and armies.

Red China's nuclear blast has produced some increased talk among the nonaligned nations of Africa and Asia for the need to admit her to the United Nations. United States officials last night said that to do so would amount to rewarding Peking for new "misbehavior."

They said a recent American estimate convinced them that Red China would be denied entry to the U.N. again this session by about the same margin of votes as last year.

Apart from admission to the U.N., however, there is also the question of whether Red China now might be asked to join in the Geneva disarmament conferences. The disarmament group consists of 18 nations officially, but only 17 in actuality, with an empty chair for France.

State Department spokesman McCloskey said yesterday that if there was a "consensus"

to admit Red China as a non-U.N. member to those Geneva talks, the United States would go along with it.

"The Chinese Communists have repelled world opinion," he said, "by starting (nuclear) atmospheric tests in the face of an agreement by 107 countries to ban such tests."

"If the Chinese have anything constructive to say," he continued, "the channels for so saying it are available to them. We haven't heard anything constructive from them yet."

As for participation in the Geneva talks, said McCloskey, Secretary Rusk has said the Chinese position on arms control and disarmament "has been persistently negative."

"Even so," McCloskey continued, "it is obvious that at some stage in the disarmament process all militarily significant nations must participate in arms control agreements, if such agreements are to have any real meaning. In this sense, we have never precluded the participation of any country in disarmament negotiations."